

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the Leisure Services Committee held, in committee, in the Council Chamber, Civic & Administrative Offices, Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh BT8 6RB on Thursday, 7th December 2006 at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor J Beattie
(in the chair)

ALDERMEN: J Norris MBE

COUNCILLORS: Mrs A Beattie
Ms J Bunting (from 7.40 p.m.)
Mrs S Duncan
C Tosh

IN ATTENDANCE: Director of Finance & Leisure Services, Grants Officer
and Assistant Members' Services Officer

APOLOGIES: Apologies were recorded on behalf of Councillors
Cochrane, Drysdale, Hall, Hanvey, Spratt and
Stevenson.

LS/2006/142 : CHAIRING THE MEETING

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That, in the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman,
Councillor J Beattie chair the meeting.

**TABLED : MINUTES OF THE LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 2ND NOVEMBER 2006 (copy previously circulated)**

MATTERS ARISING

**LS/2006/143 : ROBINSON CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP
(Minute No. LS/2006/132 refers)**

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services reported that the Area Manager
Leisure would be tabling a report on the above at the next Committee meeting.

Noted.

**LS/2006/144 : SECURITY FENCE AT REAR OF THE ROBINSON CENTRE
(Minute No. LS/2006/133 refers)**

Councillor J Beattie sought an update in respect of the above.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services outlined that he would investigate the matter with the Area Manager Leisure, and report back to the next meeting.

Noted.

LS/2006/145 : OFFER OF FUNDING FOR THE CARRYDUFF PLAYGROUND

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services introduced Nicola Ferguson, the Council's Grants Officer, who had played a principal role in the funding project.

He sought approval, on behalf of the Council, to sign the letter of acceptance of funding from the Big Lottery in the sum of £50,000.00, excluding VAT. He explained that a stipulation had been placed by Big Lottery that the total cost of the playground should not exceed £99,999.00.

Councillor Bunting arrived at this point at 7.40 p.m.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services asked if Members had any queries in respect of the Big Lottery funding conditions, a copy of which had previously been circulated to Members.

Councillor Duncan asked if there were any conditions in respect of usage of the facility.

The Grants Officer advised that the conditions related to the cost of the playground, as previously outlined by the Director, and that any proposals to amend the scheme must be notified to the Big Lottery. She added that when the playground had been completed, a monitoring report would have to be completed and forwarded to the Big Lottery to ensure that the facility had been provided as previously agreed.

RESOLVED : That the Council be recommended to authorise the Director of Finance & Leisure Services to sign the letter of acceptance, on behalf of the Council, in respect of the £50,000.00 grant for the Carryduff Community Playground.

LS/2006/146 : DEFIBRILLATORS

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services reported that, with the assistance of Leisure staff, the Grants Officer had been successful in securing funding of £3,960.00 for the purchase of two defibrillators for use at Belvoir Activity Centre and the Ice Bowl.

Noted.

LS/2006/147 : OFFER OF SPONSORSHIP FOR A COMMUNITY PROJECT

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services referred to the new Tesco store due to open in the Newtownbreda area next year. He reported that Officers had been contacted by a representative from Tesco advising that the company was keen to sponsor a community project in the Carryduff area.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Director of Finance & Leisure Services arrange to meet with the Tesco representative to obtain further details on the offer of sponsorship for a community project and report back. Officers to ensure that any proposed project would be located within the Newtownbreda area.

**REPORT FROM THE AREA LEISURE MANAGER
(copy previously circulated)**

In the absence of the Area Manager Leisure, the Director of Finance & Leisure Services presented the report.

LS/2006/148 : LOUGH MOSS DEVELOPMENT

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services advised that Officers were still awaiting a report from the consultant as to the best location to build, to allow for any possible future expansion of the new playground or associated activities. He added that a response had not been received as yet from the Planning Department in relation to the wetlands area to the right of the centre, which might be deemed a protected area. He added that he hoped to report further at the next meeting.

Noted.

LS/2006/149 : CHP UNIT AT THE ROBINSON CENTRE

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services reported that the mechanical and electrical work in respect of the above would be undertaken on Saturday evening/Sunday morning of 9th/10th December, and subject to encountering no difficulties, the centre's normal activities and services would be unaffected.

He outlined that the Council's Energy Officer had indicated that £8,000.00 should be allowed in the estimates for year 2 of the maintenance of the unit. He advised that if the work schedule went according to plan, and the unit was operational from February 2007, a sum of approximately £1,400.00 should suffice in the

2007-2008 financial year. He reported that the anticipated saving per annum on energy costs as a result of this installation would be in the region of £35,000.00.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Council be recommended to agree that £1,400.00 be included in the estimates for the 2007/2008 year for the maintenance of the CHP Unit at the Robinson Centre, and £8,000.00 in the 2008/2009 year.

LS/2006/150 : PRICING STRATEGY 2007/2008

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services advised Members that the Area Manager Leisure would be tabling the 2007/2008 draft pricing policy at the January Committee meeting, in respect of the Robinson, Lough Moss and Belvoir Centres for Members' consideration. He added that any amendments to this year's figures would be indicated in both monetary and percentage terms. He reported that a survey of other Councils' prices would be undertaken, and whilst there might be some variation in prices between Councils, every attempt would be made to ensure that Castlereagh's prices were competitive and offered value for money.

RESOLVED : That the Area Manager Leisure table a report on the pricing policy in respect of the Robinson, Lough Moss and Belvoir Centres for the 2007/2008 year.

LS/2006/151 : DESIGN OF CARRYDUFF PLAYGROUND

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services outlined that a number of Councillors and Officers had met with representatives from the Playground Association to discuss and finalise the preferred design of the playground, by way of preparation for the tendering process. He reported that another meeting had been scheduled on Friday 29th December at Lough Moss.

Given that this date fell within the Christmas holiday week, the Director of Finance & Leisure Services stated that he would ask the Area Manager Leisure to attempt to re-schedule the meeting.

Members agreed that if this was not possible, to proceed with the meeting on 29th December.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services advised that he would ask the Area Manager Leisure to keep Members advised in this respect.

Noted.

LS/2006/152 : BELVOIR DEVELOPMENT (MULTI PURPOSE PITCH)

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services outlined that Councillors Mrs Beattie and Hall, accompanied by Officers, had met with Pastor McIlrath and two of his Church colleagues to discuss the possible installation of a synthetic pitch to the side of the Belvoir Activity Centre. He reported that Pastor McIlrath had expressed his concern that the noise generated by pitch users would interrupt the Sunday Services, and the prayer meetings held four evenings per week.

He advised that the Area Manager Leisure had confirmed with the Pastor that it might be possible to avoid any potential noise problem in respect of the Sunday Services by management of the booking times. He outlined that Council Officers had enquired whether it would be possible to relocate the prayer meetings to another room within the church, but the Pastor had confirmed that this was not possible.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services continued by stating that it had therefore been agreed at the meeting that the Capital Projects Officer would ascertain whether it would be possible to move the location away from the church and closer towards Belvoir Drive, without the Council incurring additional installation costs. He reported that the Capital Projects Officer had also suggested a tree and scrub planting programme to the rear of the proposed site, which would assist in reducing any associated noise from the pitch. He added that this would be a continuation of the existing planting along the north/east boundary.

He circulated for Members' perusal a drawing indicating the original and revised location of the pitch, and he pointed out that the suggested new location would result in the pitch itself being approximately 5 metres further away from the church, and over 40 metres in total. He outlined that the Capital Projects Officer had indicated that any attempt to move the pitch further away would result in additional costs being incurred by Council, and potential problems with car parking provision.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services suggested that, subject to the Committee's approval, another meeting be convened with the Church representatives to discuss the new location. He added that, as it was important that the momentum of the process was maintained and the project remained within the funding and building timescale, an application for planning permission be submitted to negate any delays to the process.

Councillor Mrs Beattie outlined that at the last meeting, Officers had asked the Pastor to consider the suggested relocation of the pitch and respond to them within two weeks, but she understood that no contact had been made as yet.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services reported that the Capital Projects Officer was required to seek quotations from companies on the Council's tender

list for the necessary preparation work, but this had been delayed due to the potential change in location. He added that the Officer was also assessing and preparing costs for the extension or re-location of the existing changing facilities to meet both current and anticipated higher demands for the facility. He outlined that one option being considered was building an extension to the rear of the centre to house larger changing rooms and possibly utilise the current changing area as an enlarged fitness suite or sauna/steam room area. He added that the construction of new changing facilities to the rear would allow the centre to operate normally without disruption or loss of facilities, and would further address outstanding DDA issues with regard to the existing changing areas.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services outlined that a sum of between £40,000.00 and £50,000.00 would need to be put into the 2007/2008 estimates to cover costs over and above the costs of the pitch.

Concern was expressed as to whether the provision of additional planting would have implications for any potential future projects at that location.

With regard to the implications on the available number of car parking spaces, Councillor Duncan suggested that a sign be erected advising customers that parking was available at the playground.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services outlined that he would pass Members' concerns and suggestions on to the Area Manager Leisure and the Capital Projects Officer for consideration.

Following further discussion, Councillor J Beattie proposed that the Council proceed with the project, on the basis of the new location as outlined by Officer and the provision of additional planting.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Duncan.

RESOLVED : That the Council be recommended to agree that

- (a) the multi purpose pitch project at the Belvoir Activity Centre be progressed on the basis of the new location as outlined by Officers, whilst bearing in mind Councillors' comments in respect of car parking and any implications of additional planting on potential future development
- (b) Officers be authorised to submit a planning application in respect of the above project
- (c) Officers be authorised to seek quotations from companies on the Council's tender list for the necessary preparation work

- (d) a sum of between £40,000.00 and £50,000.00 be included in the 2007/2008 estimates for associated costs over and above the cost of the provision of the pitch.

LS/2006/153 : RESERVOIR DEVELOPMENT

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services advised Members that a response had still not been received from the Chief Executive of the Water Service, and that the Area Manager Leisure had forwarded a second letter.

Noted.

LS/2006/154 : CONTAINER FOR BELVOIR

The Director of Finance & Leisure Service advised Members that quotations had been sought for the provision of a 20ft container, to be sited to the rear of Belvoir Activity Centre. He outlined that TFK Containers had submitted the lowest price for a used container in good condition, however, the supplier had pointed out that, due its metal construction, the container would be vulnerable to weather conditions and condensation.

He outlined that to avoid the carpet and other items of equipment being damaged, the supplier had recommended that the container be spray insulated. He advised that the cost of the spray insulation was approximately £450.00 plus VAT. He added that this work could be carried out by an independent company, and that centre staff would re-paint the top of the container to provide additional protection against the elements. He reported that it was anticipated that the container would be on site within the next few weeks, and the carpet currently stored at DIIB would be transferred to Belvoir Activity Centre as soon as possible after installation.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services outlined that the Area Manager Leisure was therefore seeking the Committee's approval to have the container spray insulated, and that the most competitive price would be sought.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Council be recommended to agree that spray insulation be purchased for the storage container to be located at Belvoir Activity Centre, at a cost of approximately £450.00 plus VAT.

LS/2006/155 : POSSIBLE LOUGH MOSS DEVELOPMENT

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services advised Members that the Area Manager Leisure had been approached by a representative of C A Haffey & Son, who installed and maintained synthetic surface pitches throughout Ireland. He

added that, as a locally based company, they were ideally placed to offer the maintenance support often needed to maintain artificial surfaces, both during and after warranty periods. He outlined that the company had indicated that they were interested in entering into a potential partnership with the Council to provide additional synthetic playing surfaces, not only at Lough Moss, but at other suitable sites in the Borough as well.

He indicated that these would likely take the form of indoor based football pitches, but there had been a suggestion of the possibility of installing a 3rd generation pitch at Lough Moss that would facilitate football, rugby and gaelic football.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services reported that Haffey & Son would be prepared to undertake all the capital costs and maintenance, with the Council managing the pitch. He added that the terms and conditions of the partnership would have to be negotiated and agreed upon, and this would need to include elements of Council staff time and floodlight costs.

Subject to Committee/Council approval, the Director of Finance & Leisure Services advised that the Area Manager Leisure had suggested that Haffey & Son be asked to make a presentation to the Leisure Services Committee, on the understanding that this would not commit the Council to anything.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That a representative of C A Haffey & Son be invited to make a presentation to a future Committee meeting, in order for Members to obtain further details in respect of the company's request to enter into a partnership with the Council to provide additional synthetic playing surfaces within the Borough.

LS/2006/156 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE IRISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION, TOGETHER WITH THE CRITERIA RELATING TO FIFA INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services outlined that, subject to meeting the required criteria, the IFA would welcome the opportunity to discuss the above programme. He explained that the IFA would invite the Council to enter into an agreement/partnership, and would fund the installation of 3rd generation pitches.

He continued by stating that this might be an opportunity to complement the facilities at the Billy Neill Centre and potentially increase usage and raise its profile. He added that there might also be an opportunity to consider Lough Moss as a potential site, particularly as demand for pitch provision from football and gaelic clubs far outweighed current supply capability. He advised that Lough Moss would have the ability to meet most of the essential and desirable criteria, with the exception of storage space and IT provision.

Councillor Tosh enquired if the pitches would be used solely for soccer.

The Director advised that he understood from the Area Manager Leisure that other playing surfaces had been mentioned by the IFA.

He outlined that appropriate Council staff were due to meet with the IFA on Wednesday 6th December to obtain further details, and the Area Manager Leisure would report back to the Committee in due course. He advised that a copy of the correspondence had also been forwarded to Technical & Environmental Services/Grounds Maintenance for their records and interest.

Councillor Duncan asked that a copy of the letter also be forwarded to the Sports Development Officer.

Following discussion, Members were of the view that Officers be authorised to have initial discussions with the IFA, and report back to the Committee.

RESOLVED : That

- (a) appropriate Officers be authorised to meet with the IFA on Wednesday 6th December in respect of the FIFA Investment Programme, with a view to investigating potential projects at the Billy Neill and Lough Moss Centres, and report back.
- (b) a copy of the correspondence from the IFA be forwarded to the Sports Development Officer.

LS/2006/157 : ADVERTISING

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services reported that the Area Manager Leisure had been approached by two companies in relation to the possible installation of large LCD/Plasma screens within the leisure centres. He advised that the screens would be used to advertise local/national businesses with the added benefit of agreed time being allowed for use by the centre/Council. He outlined that a fee would be payable to the centre/Council, and the figures suggested by each of the two companies was anything up to 10% of income generated.

He indicated that all relevant maintenance and insurance issues would be covered by the company concerned, and there would therefore be no additional risk to Council. He added that the Council would also have a veto on any adverts deemed inappropriate.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services advised that the Area Manager Leisure was seeking permission to meet with the two companies and negotiate

the best deal possible for Council. He added that the information would also be passed onto DIII B Management for their perusal and interest.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Area Manager Leisure be authorised to carry out further research into the offer of the introduction of an advertising scheme within the leisure centres, and report back to the Committee.

LS/2006/158 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM TANYA ROSS (DIVING COACH AT THE ROBINSON CENTRE) RE: DIVING BOARDS AT THE ROBINSON CENTRE

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services outlined that the above employee had made initial contact with Swim Ireland in relation to possible financial assistance towards new diving boards at the Robinson. He added that Swim Ireland had sought clarification as to the amount of financial assistance that would be forthcoming from the Council to supplement their input.

He advised that the anticipated cost of replacing the 1m and 3m boards and fulcrums would be in the region of £17,000.00. He outlined that Tanya had indicated that if the boards and any other ancillary equipment was purchased, it was likely that it could be transferred to a new build, depending upon the condition of the boards and equipment at time of transfer.

The Director outlined that the Area Manager Leisure had asked the Grants Officer to investigate if there were any potential funding options. He explained that Tanya was a current Irish Diving Champion and was well respected within the "diving" sports community.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That further details be obtained in respect of possible financial assistance from Swim Ireland towards new diving boards at the Robinson Centre, in terms of the level of funding involved, confirmation that no conditions would be placed as to the removal of the boards to any new build, confirmation that the diving boards were of the type that could be transferred. The Officer to report back to the Committee in due course.

LS/2006/159 : AMENDMENTS TO NORMAL OPENING TIMES DURING FESTIVE PERIOD

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services outlined for Members' information, the amendments to normal opening times, as follows:

Robinson Centre

Closed – 25th/26th/27th December 2006 and 1st January 2007

Lough Moss/Belvoir

Closed – 24th/25th/26th December 2006 and 1st January 2007

He advised that the above arrangements were consistent with previous years and reflected anticipated business levels, and staff would be required to take annual leave to ensure that their contracted hours were fulfilled.

Noted.

LS/2006/160 : CHRISTMAS PROMOTION

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services reported that staff at the Robinson Centre were currently working on Christmas Theme Days to be held on Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th December, and as part of this initiative, the Area Manager Leisure was seeking approval to reduce the price of junior swims to £1.00 on these two days only. He added that staff were also organising a Christmas Disco on Friday 22nd December.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Area Manager Leisure be authorised to reduce the junior swim rate to £1.00 on Christmas Theme Days being held at the Robinson Centre on 23rd and 24th December 2006.

LS/2006/161 : PERFORMANCE RELATED PAY (PRP)

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services reported that the Assistant Managers at the Robinson Centre had fallen short of their set budgetary targets. He advised that under the terms agreed with the Trade Unions and staff, the two Robinson Centre Assistant Managers had compiled reports of expenditure and income budget headings, and in their view, this had contributed to the overall targets not being achieved and was outside their control.

He sought approval to defer further consideration of this matter in order for him and the Internal Auditor to fully consider the reports, and discuss the matter further with Members at the next Committee meeting.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That consideration of Performance Related Pay be deferred to the January Committee meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

LS/2006/162 : CONTRACT FOR THE SUPPLY OF PHOENIX GAS

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services sought approval to sign the contracts for the supply of Phoenix Gas at Lough Moss and the CHP unit at the Robinson Centre.

RESOLVED : That the Council be recommended to grant approval to the Director of Finance & Leisure Services to sign the contract for the supply of Phoenix Gas at the Lough Moss Centre and the CHP unit at the Robinson Centre.

LS/2006/163 : EMAIL RE: INCIDENT AT ROBINSON CENTRE (circulated at the meeting)

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services reported that Officers had received an email from a mother thanking a Robinson Centre employee for their quick action when her son had been involved in an incident at the Robinson Centre. He added that he was not, however, aware of the details surrounding this incident.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Area Manager Leisure provide the Mayor's Office with details of a recent incident at the Robinson Centre, in order for a letter of thanks to be forwarded to the employee concerned.

LS/2006/164 : TRADING ACCOUNTS FOR BELVOIR, LOUGH MOSS AND ROBINSON CENTRES FOR APRIL 2006 TO OCTOBER 2006

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services addressed a number of Members' queries in respect of the above.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Director of Finance & Leisure Services obtain an explanation as to the reasons for the underspend in the Robinson Centre wages, and report back to the next meeting.

As there was no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.35 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Leisure Services : 07.12.06

Adopted by the Council this _____ day of
_____2006 with the exception of

Minute Nos: _____

MAYOR